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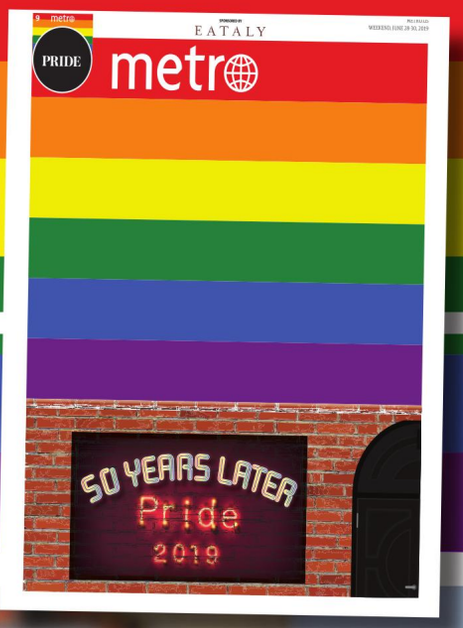


STONEWALL INN: 50 YEARS LATER

The world celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising. 9-25

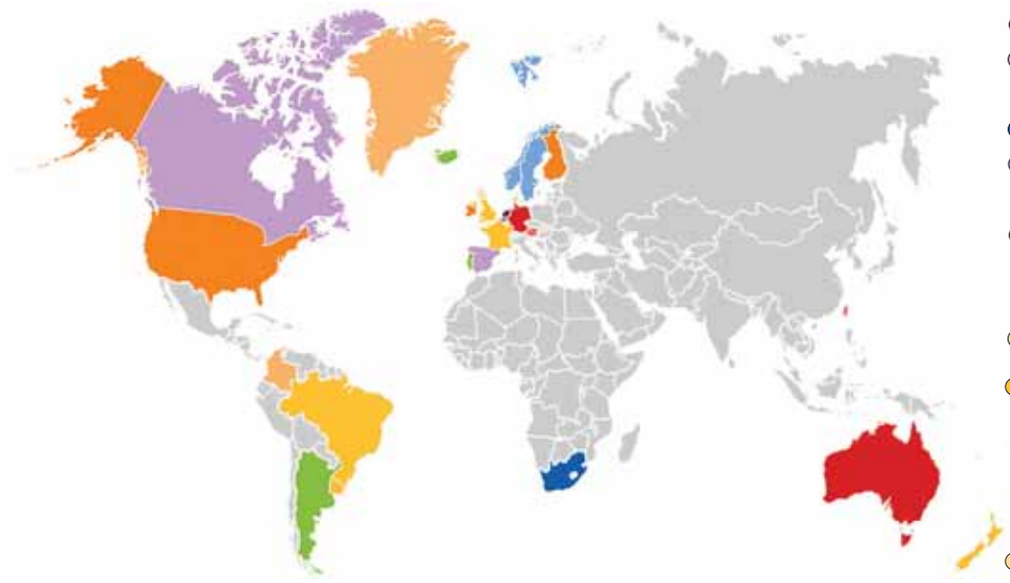
More than 4 million are expected to turn out for Sunday's Pride Parade.

STRONGER THAN EVER

GETTY IMAGES

Where gay marriage is legal

Where and since when national laws allow same-sex couples to marry.* **PEW RESEARCH CENTER & STATISTA**



- 2000 The Netherlands
- 2003 Belgium
- 2005 Canada
- Spain
- 2006 South Africa
- 2009 Norway
- Sweden
- 2010 Argentina
- Iceland
- Portugal
- 2012 Denmark
- 2013 Brazil
- England/Wales
- France
- New Zealand
- Uruguay
- 2014 Luxembourg
- Scotland
- 2015 Finland
- Ireland
- United States
- 2016 Colombia
- Greenland
- 2017 Australia
- Malta
- Germany
- 2019 Austria
- Taiwan

*As of June 28, 2019. Also legal in some jurisdictions in Mexico.

North Macedonia to host its first Gay Pride march, in test of rights record

Saturday's march comes on the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots.

REUTERS

North Macedonia will host its first Gay Pride march on Saturday, in a test of the conservative Balkan country's record on respecting minority rights as it seeks to join the European Union.

Gay men, lesbians and other members of the LGBTQ community continue to face discrimination and hate attacks across the Balkans, though North Macedonia is one of the few countries in the region that has yet to hold a Pride event.

"Discrimination [is present] on the street. ... I have experienced physical threats. It is an everyday situation," Kristina Mitrovska, 30, told Reuters as she strolled through the capital Skopje with her 21-year-old partner Irina Gesovska.

"It depends on who you run into," Gesovska added.

Bobi, a gay man originally from a small town in North Macedonia, echoed that view, saying he had to move to a safe house in Skopje to escape persistent abuse.

"Work, freedom and peace of mind are the main things," said Bobi, who declined to give his full name and only agreed to give an interview on camera with his face obscured for fear of possible reprisals.

North Macedonia, which is hoping to secure a date to start membership talks with the E.U., must improve human and minority rights before it can join the bloc.

IMPROVEMENT

Antonio Mihajlov of the rights group Subversive Front said the situation of LGBTQ people in North Macedonia had improved since the pro-E.U. Social Democrats and their ethnic Albanian coalition partners replaced the conservative VMRO DPMNE party in 2017, but there was still plenty more to do.

LGBTQ people in North Macedonia face particular discrimination in the areas of education, health and welfare protection, and hate speech, he said.

Saturday's march comes on the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots in New York which kicked off the modern gay rights movement.

Many Balkan countries including Serbia and Kosovo have already held Pride marches. Bosnia, another former Yugoslav republic, is due to hold its first such march in September.

Although a number of government officials, including the Minister of Social Policy Mila Carovska, said they would join Saturday's march, right-wing organizations have scheduled a rally at the same time in central Skopje.

In posts of social networks, several such groups branded LGBTQ people as the "spawn of Satan."

North Macedonia earlier this year changed its official name from Macedonia after reaching an agreement with neighboring Greece that ended a decades-old dispute and opened its path to NATO and E.U. membership talks. **REUTERS**

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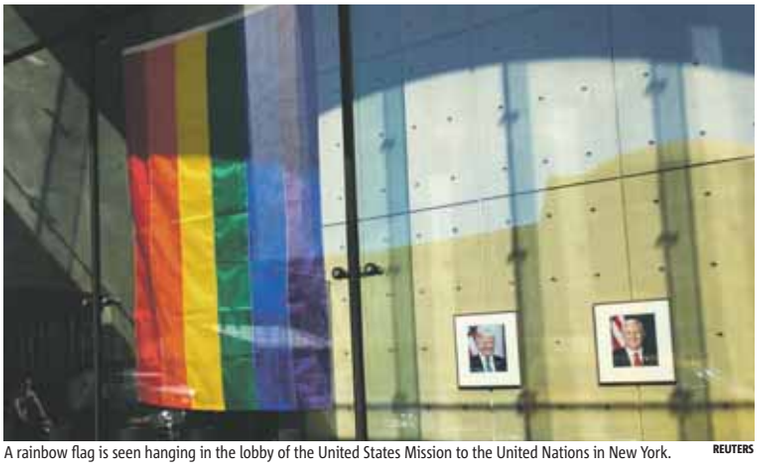
World Pride celebrates LGBTQ advances, but mourns setbacks under Trump

Madonna will close the festivities with a concert Sunday night.



A rainbow flag is seen hanging in the lobby of the United States Mission to the United Nations in New York. REUTERS

New York City will host 4 million visitors this week to celebrate World Pride for both a celebration of advancements in LGBTQ rights and a call to action in the face of anti-LGBTQ policies enacted by U.S. President Donald Trump.

New York has been designated the site for World Pride this year to mark the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising on June 28, 1969. The annual Gay Pride Parade on Sunday will coincide with parades in cities around the world.

The opening ceremony took place on Wednesday with a benefit concert at Brooklyn's Barclays Center, and festivities will conclude Sunday night with a concert on the Manhattan waterfront featuring Madonna.

The anniversary commemorates the moment when patrons of a gay bar in Greenwich Village called the Stonewall Inn rose up in defiance of police harassment, leading to a national and worldwide movement for equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other queer people.

LGBTQ people will celebrate their many accomplishments toward equality in the five decades since, including winning the constitutional right to same-sex marriage through a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 2015.

But advocates are also alarmed about losing those gains.

The Trump administration has banned transgender people from the U.S. military, cut funding for HIV and AIDS research, supported the right of medical providers and adoption agencies to deny services to LGBTQ people, and aborted plans to gather data about sexual orientation and gender identity in the 2020 census.

> **"I don't know what we have to celebrate. Right now I would love to feel that I have more pride than I have at present."**
>
> **Larry Kramer, playwright and founder of Act Up**

"I don't know what we have to celebrate. Right now I would love to feel that I have more pride than I have at present," said Larry Kramer, the playwright and founder of Act Up, which fights for AIDS research and legislation.

Despite advances in civil rights, 32 states lack nondiscrimination protections against LGBTQ people, according to the Human Rights Campaign, and 1.1 million Americans and 37 million people worldwide live with HIV/AIDS, according to U.S. government statistics.

"Today our biggest problem is our inability to be united and to fight back in a strong way," Kramer, 84, told Reuters in an interview.

Trump issued a statement of solidarity on June 1 to begin Pride Month, saying his administration has launched a global campaign to decriminalize homosexuality, while rolling back protections at home.

"Trump alternates between saying we'll be good to you and then dismantling all sorts of programs," said Richard Wandel, a longtime gay-rights activist. REUTERS

Where LGBTQ+ people are protected in the workplace

Many states still lack nondiscrimination protections.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN & STATISTA

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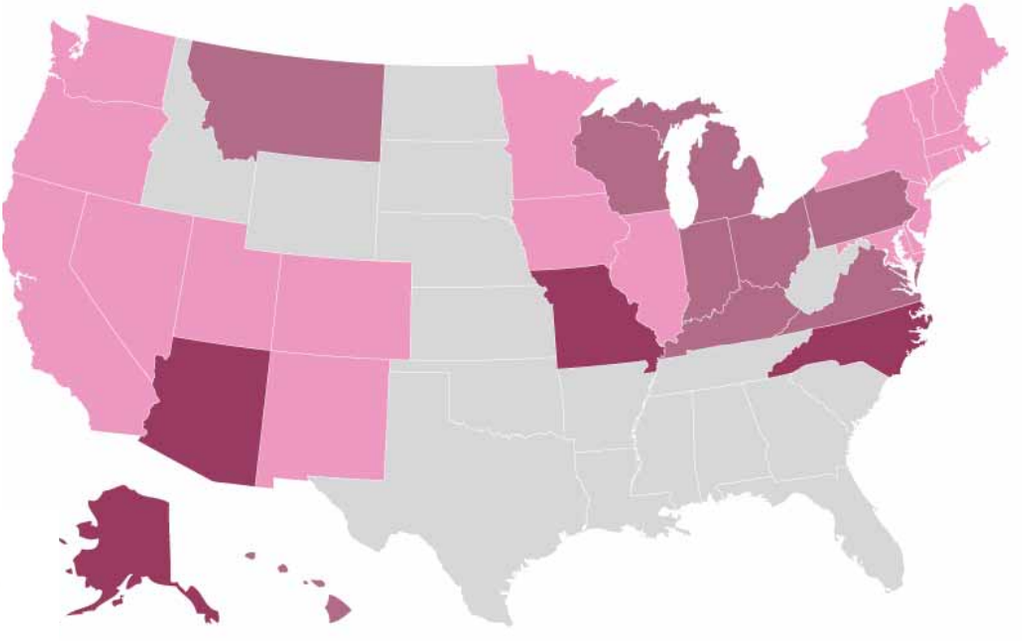

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National LGBTQ Wall of Honor unveiled at Stonewall Inn

The wall, which celebrates LGBTQ leaders, was revealed Thursday.

REUTERS

A half-century after the launch of the modern LGBTQ rights movement, 50 trailblazers in the struggle for equality were honored on Thursday with the unveiling of a wall of honor inside New York's historic Stonewall Inn.

The ceremony fell on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising on June 28, 1969, when the Greenwich Village gay bar's patrons fought back during a police raid, sparking days of sometimes violent demonstrations to protest harassment.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) activists are still fighting for the achievements of their predecessors to be recognized.

"A community, indeed, a civil rights movement, that does not know where it came from ... doesn't really know where it's going," San Diego City Commissioner Nicole Murray-Ramirez, the wall's founder and longtime LGBTQ activist, told people gathered at the Stonewall.

The ceremony was one of the many events and dedications throughout the Stonewall 50 World Pride celebration in New York, a series of days dedicated to observe LGBTQ advancements.

All of the honorees are deceased. They include musician and AIDS activist Michael Callen, a gay man who was one of the first to publish the tenets of safe sex, and Marsha P. Johnson, a black transgender woman who is reputed to have thrown the first brick at the Stonewall riots.

Two others are considered martyrs of the LGBTQ cause: Harvey Milk, the first openly gay elected official in California whose assassination made him a martyr of the gay community; and Matthew Shepard, a gay college student whose murder in 1998 garnered national attention; and others.

Since the riots, the Stonewall Inn has been completely remodeled. What was once an underground dive bar is now a two-story lounge with a large pool table and lush wood paneling.

"There are some people honored here who have done amazing things, that the world doesn't necessarily know about," said Richard Dworkin, a musician and the former partner of Callen.

While the main point of the ceremony was to honor the achievements of the past, advocates also focused on the battle to keep LGBTQ rights. Many voiced their concerns of losing some of the gains as the Trump administration makes anti-LGBTQ policy decisions aligned with religious, conservative Republicans.

> **"A community, indeed, a civil rights movement, that does not know where it came from ... doesn't really know where it's going."**
>
> **San Diego City Commissioner Nicole Murray-Ramirez**

"We need to figure out a way for that to not happen," said Judy Shepard, the mother of Matthew Shepard. "And the way we do that is to know our past and work toward our future."

REUTERS

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Haven Green finds its home in Little Italy

Earlier this week, City Council voted to approve Haven Green in Little Italy, the first LGBTQ-friendly affordable senior housing in the city.

"One of the reasons that we are excited to be a part of this project is that it will bring deeply affordable, LGBTQ-friendly senior housing to a community that 50 years ago was at the heart of the LGBTQ civil rights movement, and particularly the historic resistance at the neighboring Stonewall Inn," Scott Short, CEO of RiseBoro Community Partnership, one of the development partners, told Metro.

Not only will this development be LGBTQ-friendly, but 30 percent of units will be set aside for formerly homeless seniors. Lauren Thomas, chair of the board of Open New York said in a press release: "Haven Green will allow 123 seniors, including 37 facing homelessness, to live a dignified life in the city they have called home for so long instead of feeling trapped in inaccessible walk-ups."

COURTESY HAVENGREENCOMMUNITY.NYC

As the city's LGBTQ community gets grayer, changes are needed to reflect the community. According to a press release sent out by SAGE CEO Michael Adams, "Nearly half of LGBT elders face discrimination when applying for housing, and as the LGBT older population rapidly grows toward 7 million by 2030, we must act now to ensure they have access to the housing they desperately need and deserve as they age."

Council Member Margaret S. Chin echoed Adams, saying in a statement: "With more than 200,000 older New Yorkers waiting in line for affordable housing — with an average six- to 10-year wait time … New York City Council stands ready to build inclusive communities that welcome all New Yorkers — regardless of their socioeconomic status, background or identity."

Not only will this development provide green space, but it was also designed with sustainability in mind. The "passive house" design will help reduce energy consumption and was designed to reuse and manage stormwater and more.

On top of those incredible features, the development will also include a community meeting space and services provided by RiseBoro Community Partnership, Habitat NYC, and SAGE.

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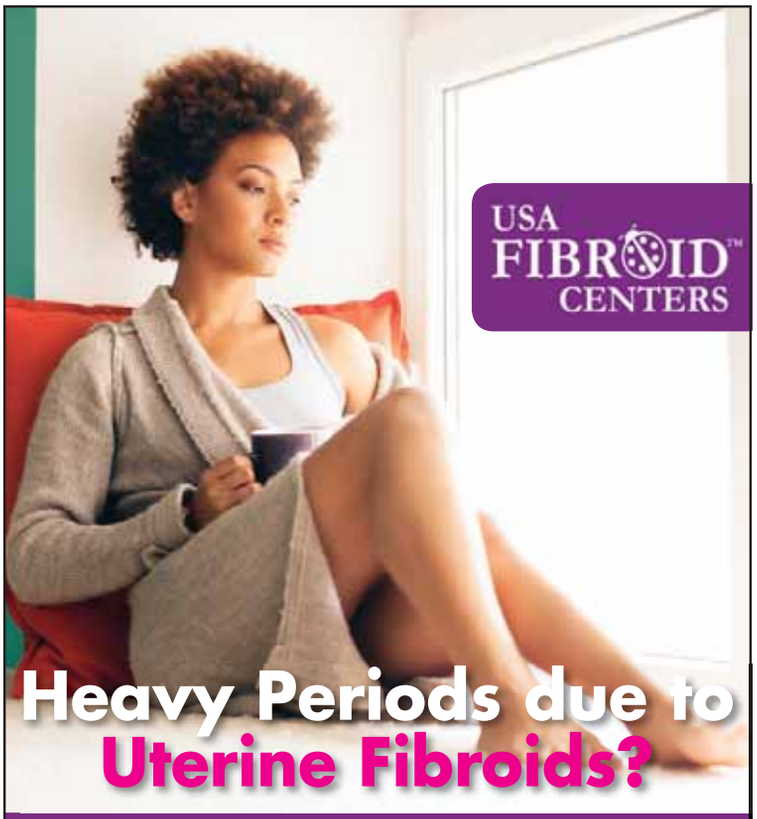

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50 Years after Stonewall, same-sex weddings now mainstream

Rainbow wedding cakes have become a popular product.

REUTERS

Kimberly Bailey, owner of The Butter End Cakery in Los Angeles, loves taking wedding cake orders from LGBTQ clients because their design requests are often more creative than straight couples.

She recently made a square layer cake with black piping for a gay male couple who wanted something different than the traditional round cake with gold piping that is served at most straight weddings.

While Bailey believes every couple should take pride in expressing themselves through their wedding cake, she draws the line at making her creations overwhelmed in rainbow colors.

"You don't need to dye your cakes," Bailey said, referring to the rainbow symbol of diversity that has become an emblem for LGBTQ people.

While rainbow wedding cakes remain in high demand, Bailey prefers using rainbow as a decorative accent rather than the focus of the cakes she makes.

Quirky wedding cakes are just one of the ways in which the $76 billion-a-year wedding industry in the United States has embraced and adapted to same-sex couples in the four years since the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution provides same-sex couples the right to marry.

The landmark decision opened up a fresh stream of business for the caterers, bakers, florists and venue operators who serve those wanting to tie the knot.

Same-sex unions and other LGBTQ rights may have taken even longer to come to pass but for the Stonewall uprising in New York 50 years ago this month when patrons of a gay bar fought back against police harassment. Celebrations have kicked off around the world to mark the protest, considered the beginning of the modern LGBTQ rights movement.

For Carla Ten Eyck, a Hartford, Connecticut-based photographer, the segment of her business involving same-sex couples has grown steadily each year since the court ruling.

"I get more and more inquiries. I'm booking more every year," she said.

A number of wedding-services providers interviewed by Reuters estimated 1 percent to 6 percent of their annual revenues now come from lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other queer people. REUTERS

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50 Years later, the Stonewall Inn is spreading Pride all over the globe

ALL IMAGES GETTY IMAGES

On the 50th anniversary of Pride, the Stonewall Inn is still fighting for change all over the world.

PAT KING
patrick.king@metro.us

It was a rainy day in New York City as legendary bar and ground zero for Global Pride the Stonewall Inn celebrated its 50th anniversary of Pride with a kick-off party. The night was a fundraiser for the bar's official foundation, the Stonewall Inn Gives Back Initiative (SIGBI), in order to raise resources for activist groups in mostly-rural areas to help fund their efforts to effect meaningful change on the ground.

The energy in the packed bar was palpable as people were drinking and celebrating this special evening in the place where those riots of the Stonewall Uprising occurred half a century ago. Patrons and friends packed the upstairs room as members of SIGBI presented a grant to Brandon West, a young activist from Southeast Kansas whose organization, Project Q&A, had helped to bring visibility to the LGBTQ community in his rural area.

"All across our nation, in towns large and small, there are members of our rainbow family living in fear of being fired from their jobs, denied housing, and being shunned from their communities," said West, addressing the crowd. "Living in rural communities can be a scary and isolating place for LGBTQ people. Yet even in small towns, there are a large number of LGBTQ individuals being supported by an even larger number of allies. In 2016, I started an organization called Project Q&A with a mission to raise awareness for the LGBTQ community through education, empowerment and visibility. Connecting our sizable gay community with our allies, we worked to ensure that our small rural area isn't so isolated."

After receiving help from SIGBI in 2017, Project Q&A was able to host the very first Pride in Southeast Kansas. In offering this kind of meaningful support, the Stonewall legacy is being spread all over the globe to even the most unlikely of places — which is, after all, the battle that needs to be fought.

"The whole purpose of this is to keep the Stonewall legacy alive and use that global name across the country and use it in those places where they really need it where they still have the social stigma that they face every day," explains Stacy Letz, co-owner of the Stonewall Inn and co-founder of SIGBI.

You can feel the tremendous weight and importance standing in the room. But more than that, the energy in the Stonewall Inn feels like a reassuring hug. This is a safe space. All are welcome here.

"It's the gay church, it's where people come to rejoice or where people come to mourn," says Kurt Kelly, who co-owns the Stonewall Inn with Lentz. "It's where lesbians, gay men, transgender, drag queens, straight allies — straight people if they want to come in — bears, leather...this is their home! It's a safe space for everyone. It's so globally known. I was just in Italy and one door that I saw had a picture of the Stonewall with a brick and a high heel [laughs]. That's how well-known it is!"

So what will be Stonewall's legacy 50 years from now? As the neighborhood institution still remains where it always has, the word "Stonewall" itself has become a signpost for the LGBTQ community across the globe. For Lentz, she believes the Greenwich Village bar will be remembered and looked to as an example for future generations of how to create an all-encompassing safe space.

"Stonewall itself is a global icon, a symbol across the globe, and that's what it needs to be," explains Lentz on the importance of the bar. "We want to make sure it stays a bar and a place for the community to gather."

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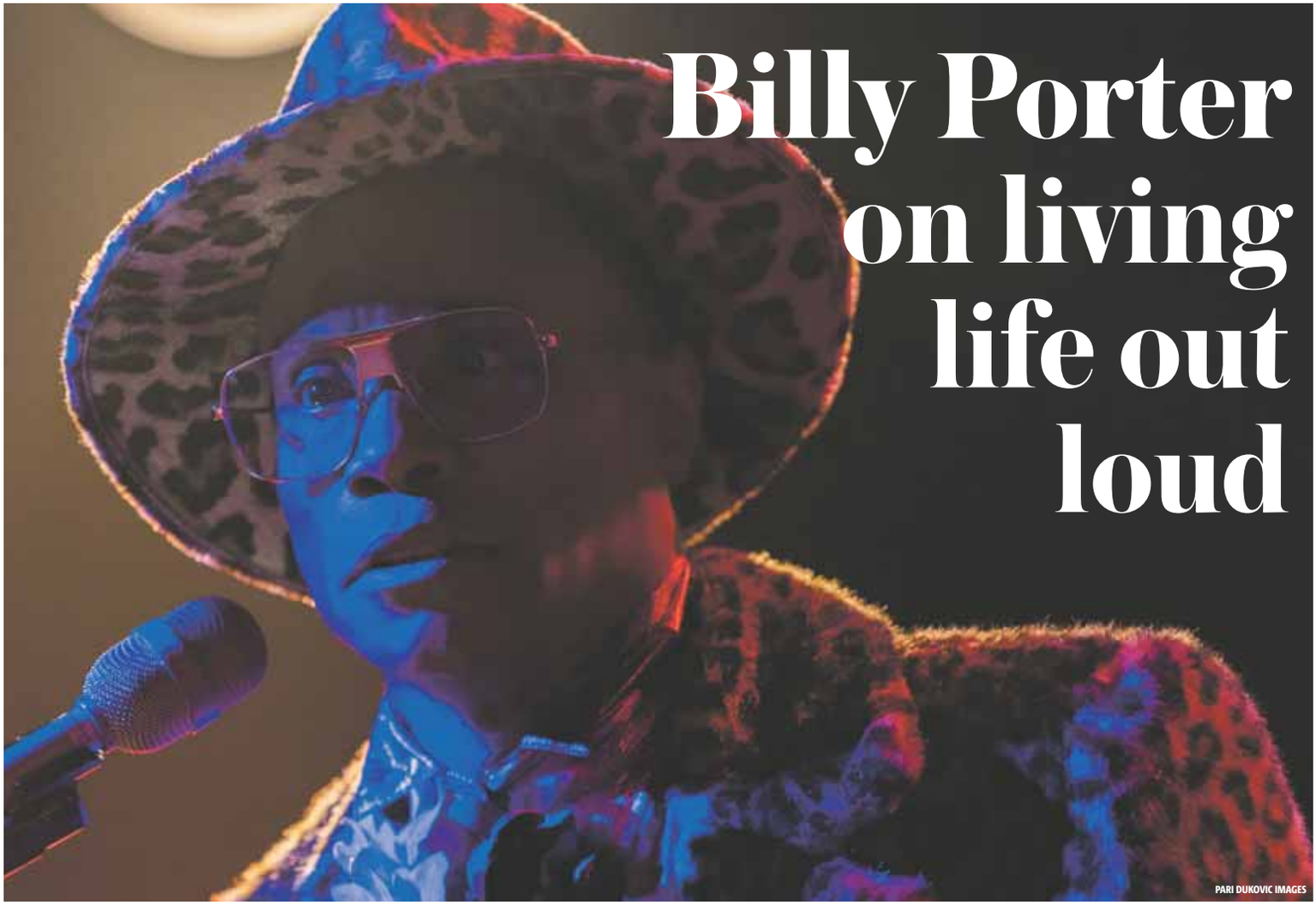

PARI DUKOVIC IMAGES

Billy Porter on living life out loud

How the "Pose" actor found acceptance and purpose through a life of "service."

PAT KING
patrick.king@metro.us

Billy Porter is on his lunch break during what many would consider a late dinner.

Members of the press were lucky to gain an audience with the esteemed actor in between his shooting schedule for the second season of FX's acclaimed show "Pose," which focuses on the New York City ball culture of the 1980s. Porter has gained wide praise for his role as Pray Tell, the revered emcee of the scene, and his larger-than-life personality can be felt as he is eating his catered meal on a Bronx soundstage.

The roundtable conversation was meant to focus on the premiere of the new season on Tuesday, June 11 (more on that next week), but eventually circled around to Porter's recent universal acceptance after more than 25 years in show business. Much like the characters on the show, Porter, 49, has had to fight through prejudices in Hollywood surrounding race, sex and gender in order to have the world catch up with his authentic self.

"The thing I love about this show is that it really speaks to the idea that joy is a choice," says Porter. "That life is a choice. You can choose it or not. When you watch people in the depth of the worst kind of circumstances possible, choose life anyway. That's what this show is about. We're choosing life anyway when everybody is telling us that we don't even deserve to exist on this planet — and we're living through a plague!

"As the world moves forward and we win some rights and things get better, it gets more and more difficult to explain to people the disparity is still too much.

"I could entertain you, but the at-what-cost part of the story, which is my human story, which is the third-dimension part of my humanity, is shut out. 'We don't want to hear that, just come and entertain me. You black people, you gay people, you whatever.' It's like, you can come and sing for me, but you can't stay at the same hotel."

"The thing I love about this show is that it really speaks to the idea that joy is a choice."
Billy Porter

While it has been a long road for Porter, he is certainly not turning back now.

"It's interesting for me because I was presented, in my hero's journey, with it 20 years ago: I could stay on this road and be the clown and the sideman and do the same s—t or I could honor myself, be completely authentic. I chose my authenticity over any version of what the possibility of fame could look like inauthentically. I was watching Oprah, actually, as I am wont to do. It was her, Maya Angelou and, I think, Iyanla Vanzant, and they were talking about service. When your intention is service, everything else will work itself out. Here I am in show business, and I'm like, how can I be of service to something other than my own ego or my bank account in an industry that is inherently narcissistic? It's like you need to have some version of ego to simply survive.

"And the ton of bricks hit me, oh right, everybody is trying to tell me that I can't do anything unless I act like a straight man. By acting like a straight man, it's their version of what a straight man means. It's their version of performed masculinity put on me. It's actually not about masculinity. It's about, 'We know you're gay, so you will never be able to live up to what our version of masculinity is.'

"From the minute that I could comprehend thought, my masculinity was in question. They sent me to the school

psychologist every day when I was 5 years old. Every day after school, to talk. About what? What are we talking about? From the minute I could comprehend anything, I needed to be 'fixed.' It was 20 years ago when I said, 'I actually don't need to be fixed.' I'm fine just as I am. I don't know how to live that way, because everything up until now has told me otherwise. I'm still going to have to fight that every single day of my life. I'm prepared to do so because service is showing up for myself. Being authentic for myself first. We teach people how to treat us. If I don't treat myself right, nobody else knows how. Now everybody else knows how because for 20 years I've been showing people how to do it while showing myself.

"There's nothing for these people. Literally, nothing. Having been there, on paper I'm not supposed to be here, either. On paper I'm a statistic. Billy Porter, sitting right next to you, is a statistic. But most of us are, and it continues!"

WHEN WE'RE ALL CUT FROM THE SAME DOUGH

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New York City gets its first *'living monument'* in Stonewall Forever

NYC introduced the first ever living monument of its kind to celebrate Pride month.

BECCA GLASSER-BAKER
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Stonewall Forever 'living' monument

STONEWALL FOREVER

Earlier this month, NYC's LGBT Community Center launched Stonewall Forever, a "living monument" celebrating 50 years of Pride.

The monument is the first of its kind, and was created by The LGBT Community Center and the National Park Service, with the additional support of Google. Although it's physically in New York City, the "living" part of it allows users from all over the world to educate themselves online. Both Floyd and Testone think this monument will be a great resource to share the story of Stonewall across the globe.

Stonewall Forever features Augmented reality (AR) experience as well as an on the web experience. The digital monument shows a Ro Haber documentary about the past 50 years of LGBTQ activism as well as how the story of Stonewall began.

Visitors can add their own stories to the monument through picture and text. The monument already has some famous contributors such as Naomi Campbell, Lance Bass, Lena Waithe, and Cynthia Nixon, to name a few.

Metro spoke with William Floyd the Director of Public Policy and Public Affairs at Google who helped bring the idea to life with the help of NYC's LGBT Community Center. He said that partnership was formed because "Immediately after the designation [of the Stonewall National Monument], I reached out to The Center to see how we could help. We knew the monument needed money, but after our first conversation, we realized we could do more. "

Floyd told Metro a bit about what inspired the virtual monument, saying, "More than a physical site, Stonewall is an idea that sparked a worldwide movement that still exists. Together we took up the challenge: how can technology expand the monument's reach and connect it to the community's continued struggle for equal rights?"

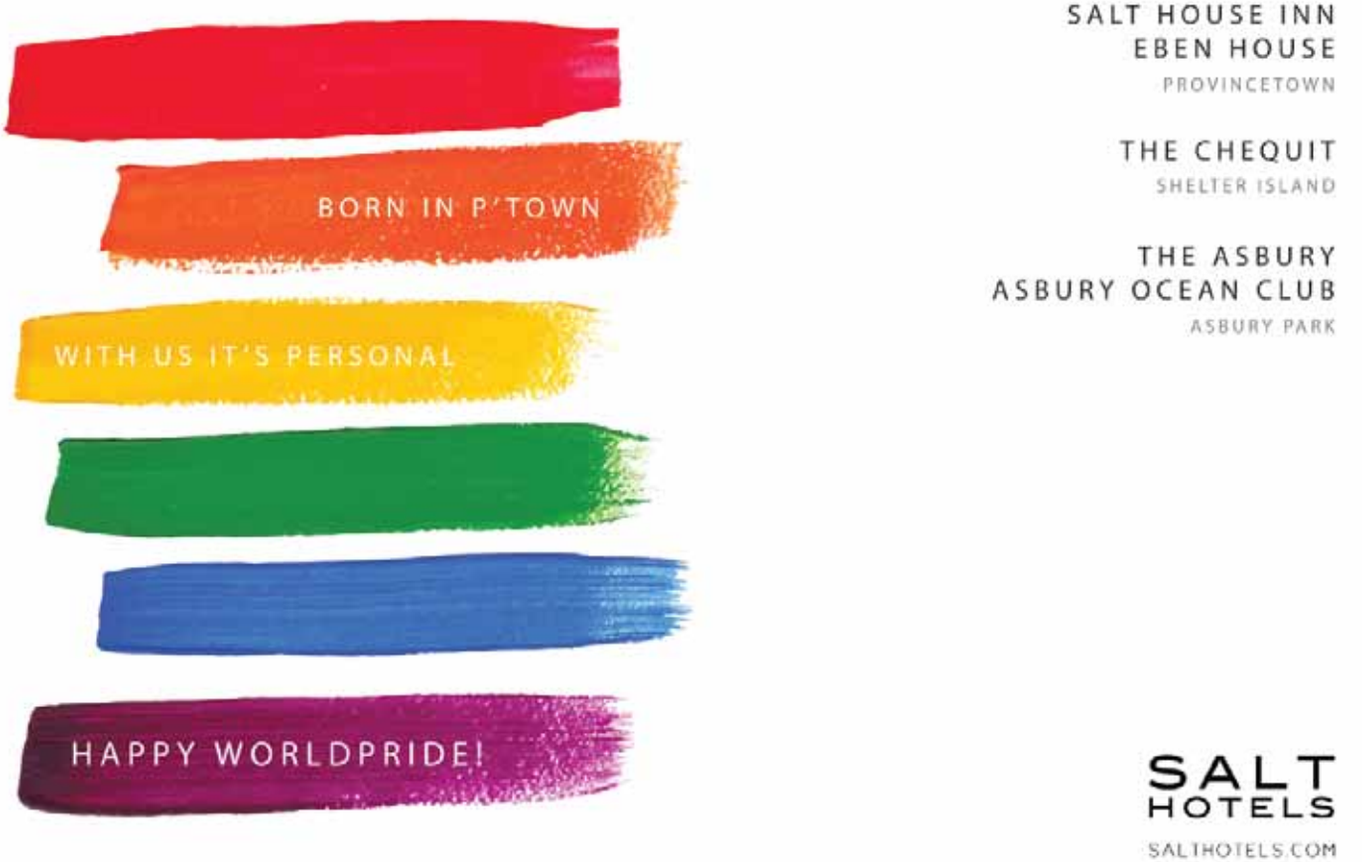
The creation process for the virtual monument took about two years. Google volunteers, in collaboration with Stink Studios, worked to transform the physical moment into a virtually shared experience.

Its goal is to ensure all voices of Stonewall and the LGBTQ movement are heard. Glennda Testone, Executive Director of NYC's LGBT Community Center, spoke with Metro about the importance of amplifying these voices. Floyd also echoed that this project was to help make sure that the diverse story of Stonewall remains inclusive.

The significance of this monument goes far beyond sharing these voices Testone told Metro, "The Stonewall Monument is an acknowledgment by our country that queer people matter and that our fight for civil rights is part of American history. So, I really see it as a warranted validation of our existence, something that will stand far beyond me…"

The NYC LGBT Community Center and Google want to encourage all visitors to add their stories to the monuments, so their voices can be heard around the world.

Both hope that this living monument helps visitors connect the past to present and realize the battle for equality is still far from over.



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Health plan focuses on low-income trans New Yorkers, HIV care

GETTY IMAGES

Amida Care helps Medicaid recipients in the LGBTQ community, and the HIV-positive, find services.

MICHAEL MARTIN
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With all the conversation around the Affordable Care Act, Medicare for All, and the overall future of healthcare in the country, the average New Yorker has become as conversant in the nuances of health policy as the typical lobbyist a generation ago.

But one aspect of our current health insurance system remains relatively obscure, even to those who could use it: The special needs health plan (or SNP). One of them, Amida Care, was organized to help some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers, particularly in the LGBTQ community.

Founded in 2003, the nonprofit organization serves local Medicaid recipients who are HIV positive, along with Medicaid recipients who are transgender, regardless of HIV status. With 7,500 members, it's the largest SNP in the state, a hybrid of access and advocacy that may seem alien to those with employer-based health insurance or an ACA plan.

"Our mission is to support access to whole-person care and services so our members can get about the business of living their authentic lives," says Doug Wirth, Amida's CEO. "We're a vocal leader in advocating for the healthcare needs and social-justice rights of the LGBTQ community. As you can imagine, this advocacy is all that much more important, given the current political climate."

In addition to referring plan members to primary care, mental-health services and addiction support, Amida Care helps transgender members to access gender-affirming hormones and surgery. HIV-positive patients are aided in obtaining medication to make the virus undetectable, and HIV-negative customers are able to obtain PrEP so they can stay that way. According to Wirth, 65 percent of the plan's members of trans experience have gotten gender-affirmation help, 25 percent of members overall are accessing PrEP, and 80 percent of the plan's HIV-positive members are undetectable.

The recent scientific conclusion that HIV-positive people who are undetectable can't transmit the virus to their HIV-negative partners has helped reduce the stigma around HIV care, but there is still a long way to go, says Wirth. "Our members were very skeptical initially, because they've been told by health care providers and public health officials for decades that it was quite easy for them to transmit the virus," he says. "For many of them, being openly HIV-positive in their communities is still a risky thing. So it's even more important than they have a healthcare provider where they can come in and talk freely. The worst possible outcome is to feel like you have to hide who you are in the doctor's office."

Amida Care contracts with local Medicaid providers to be part of the plan's network. Overall, the organization is funded through state and federal Medicaid budgets; private donations support a member-wellness program that provides nutrition and fitness services. But the vast majority of the plan is reliant on Medicaid dollars. Recent fluctuations in New York State revenue — along with talk of Medicaid cuts in Washington — makes Amida, and SNPs like it, as vulnerable as their members. Wirth would like to see the plan extend to all Medicaid recipients who are at elevated risk of contracting HIV. (Currently, the plan is only eligible to serve HIV-negative people who are of trans experience or homeless.)

For him, talk of Medicaid cuts reduces people who are already marginalized to lines on a balance sheet. "People may not realize that 60 percent of people who receive Medicaid work, in small businesses or companies without health plans," says Wirth. "One in every 10 veterans' healthcare is paid for through Medicaid. Medicaid is a really important healthcare program in this country, and we are always concerned about attacks on Medicaid at the federal level."

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A feast for your eyes

Production guru Steve Lieberman gives us the scoop on what to expect at one of NYC's largest LGBTQ events, We Pride

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There are a large number of festivals, nightclubs and extravaganzas that take place every year. People go for the music, the vibe and the overall one-of-a-kind atmosphere each event brings.

But the aesthetic at these colorful gatherings would not be the same without visuals, and that's where Steve Lieberman comes in. Lieberman has been working in lighting and production for decades and has been the mastermind behind huge events such as Coachella and EDC, and this weekend he is taking on one of NYC's biggest LGBTQ parties— We Pride.

Lieberman got his start in the industry at a young age. "Right after college I went and worked for a company called Event Effects. They were nightclub installers for lighting systems and they also did special events, mostly in the gay community. Back then it was all circuit parties– like the Black Party and the White Party and everything in the middle."

The Black Party is legendary in the Big Apple, and almost notorious for the no-holds-barred atmosphere. "The Black Party is kind of a hardcore event in the gay community. I was just there by happenstance because I worked for the company who did all the lighting for it. I was a straight kid right out of college and the Black Party being the first event I did in New York—It was a pretty intense experience," says Lieberman. "After that, there's not really much that can shock me. Having worked a lot of events in the gay community, I would say the Black Party is an anomaly. It's the one percent kind of event, but that was really my exposure in working with the gay community."

Now, 25 years later, Lieberman is still working with the gay community, and his latest project, We Pride, is right around the corner. "We've been working on We Pride for eight months. Putting it together, getting it dialed in, back and forth with site coordination and design coordination, plus confirming vendors and labor. It's been a very intense design project to make sure this thing is 100 percent," says Lieberman. "For the most part, we design everything but the audio. From the stage layout to the video screens to the lighting and production, special effects, lasers, confetti— anything else that goes with this show that is coordinated visually typically falls under our responsibility."

"The Black Party is kind of a hardcore event in the gay community. I was just there by happenstance because I worked for the company who did all the lighting for it. I was a straight kid right out of college and the Black Party being the first event I did in New York—it was a pretty intense expe-rience."

Steve Lieberman

We Pride is an all-out high-energy party featuring one of a kind performances, treats for the eyes, VIP opportunities and much more in store. Lieberman and his team have been working with each individual performer and artist to make sure the event is a truly unique experience for the audience.

"For this show, in particular, they have a lot of special artists coming in outside of just a DJ performing. Cyndi Lauper is performing and Beyonce's choreographer is coming in with a whole troupe of people, plus Cirque Du Soleil is coming in," says Lieberman. "We're coordinating with each specific special artist who is going to be there to make sure that it looks the way they want it to work while also having them understand that I'm there protecting the best interest of the show. I'm also making sure that everything balances with the show and what we deliver to the audience as well."

That balancing act for We Pride includes 500,000 watts of sound, 390" wide LED screens, 300 moving lights, 50 international dancers, 26 Lasers and more.

Even though it seems like everything may go on without a hitch, in lighting and production anything can go wrong, and the show must still go on. "Equipment might fail, something may not get loaded into the truck, maybe half of the crew just went to the wrong location, it could be anything. We could have an electrical spike, or maybe something just doesn't work, so you deal with it," says Lieberman. "In the production world, that's what separates the professionals from the amateurs. Anyone can handle it when everything goes to plan and it's rainbow and unicorns. But when things go south and you have some adversity to deal with, that's really what separates the pros."

We Pride is this Saturday, June 29 at 9 p.m. at the Javits Center (655 West 34th St. New York). For more information and tickets visit showclix.com. For more information on Steve Lieberman visit sjlighting.net

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ADELPHI UNIVERSITY NEW YORK

How listening and showing up can make you a better straight ally to the LGBTQ+ community

PAT KING
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While celebrating World Pride and the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Inn riots, it is important to remember the rights that are in danger of being stripped away from those living next door to us. While those who do not belong to the LGBTQ+ community can find ways to show their support, there is always more to learn when becoming a better straight ally to those who need people in their corner.

"It's really important to show up to our events, starting with Pride," says Christina Picciano, founder of the Ossining LGBTQ Alliance. "From there, when you're attending Pride, or a queer event or an event at a queer space, really understanding the history behind it and why we are there ... that's where I'm seeing the connection, you know? Trying to put the connection together. For example, at a flag raising. Why are we raising the Pride flag? It's not just because it's a rainbow. And so, really taking the time to learn about queer history, especially with this year being the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots. What were the Stonewall riots? Why do you need to have Pride?"

Picciano, who is also the lead singer of the Ossining, New York-based punk band All My Friends, believes that even though some may show their support for the LGBTQ+ community through their political leanings alone, showing up in a physical sense is the most important thing a straight ally can do to show their support.

"We need people to literally get in the ring for us and confront people who disagree, who are homophobic, who agree with the many policies on a federal level that are hurting us. I'm oftentimes seeing in these aggressive dialogues people of more privilege almost shutting off and saying, like, 'I can't talk to them, I'm not supportive.' And I actually want people to talk to Trump supporters and get them to understand why this is so important. It comes when we have allies and LGBTQ community together, it's just so much stronger."

PROVIDED

Joanna C. Valente is a Brooklyn-based poet and teacher and the author of four poetry collections, including "Marys of the Sea," as well as the editor of "A Shadow Map: Writing by Survivors of Sexual Assault." Valente identifies as nonbinary, choosing transient pronouns such as "they" to address their gender fluidity. Valente believes that in order to build your connection as a straight, cisgender ally, being an active listener with an open mind and heart will only strengthen your bond between you and the LGBTQ+ community.

"I'd say just listening is huge," Valente explains. "Not making judgments or asking questions in a critical way. Dialogues and conversations are so important and useful. Education is a give-and-take; while no one has to do the emotional labor to educate someone, I do think it's important to allow people to come to you with questions so they can learn from someone they know and trust. And I think it's important, of course, for cisgender/straight people to ask questions in a humble way, using language like, 'I don't totally understand this but want to,' as opposed to, 'Why do you identify that way?' I think, especially with pronouns and identity in general, it's important to just ask what someone prefers so they can feel like they can be open — as opposed to having to fit into a group or stereotype."

Listening and understanding where the movement originated and the battles being fought today is paramount. By realizing how regressive policies will affect those in your own life, you will be more equipped to show your support when it really matters.

"We need people to show up at demonstrations, show up at political events, write letters. To just really support us," says Picciano. "Especially when a lot of queer people don't have the family support. We need all the support we can get. So I really view sitting out on the sidelines as not an option. If you're going to do that I don't view you as being a true ally.

"And I think that, once you understand the history, it makes you want to get in the ring. I think educating people allows them to really, hopefully, stand up to homophobia and transphobia."

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Metro's guide to this weekend's Pride festivities

All the flags and floats are coming to Manhattan this Sunday.

BECCA GLASSER-BAKER
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This year is the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots, so it only makes sense that the 2019 Pride parade in New York City is going to be bigger than ever. NYC Pride Parade is the official host of WorldPride 2019 and Stonewall 50.

"In a world where LGBTQIA+ people continue to experience profound oppression, the NYC Pride March is a beacon of hope and community," said NYC Pride March Director Julian Sanjivan.

The NYC Pride Parade is expecting 115,000 marchers this year, making it the largest LGBTQIA+ Pride event in history. Here's everything you need to know about 2019 New York City Pride parade from when it starts, the route and even what areas to avoid.

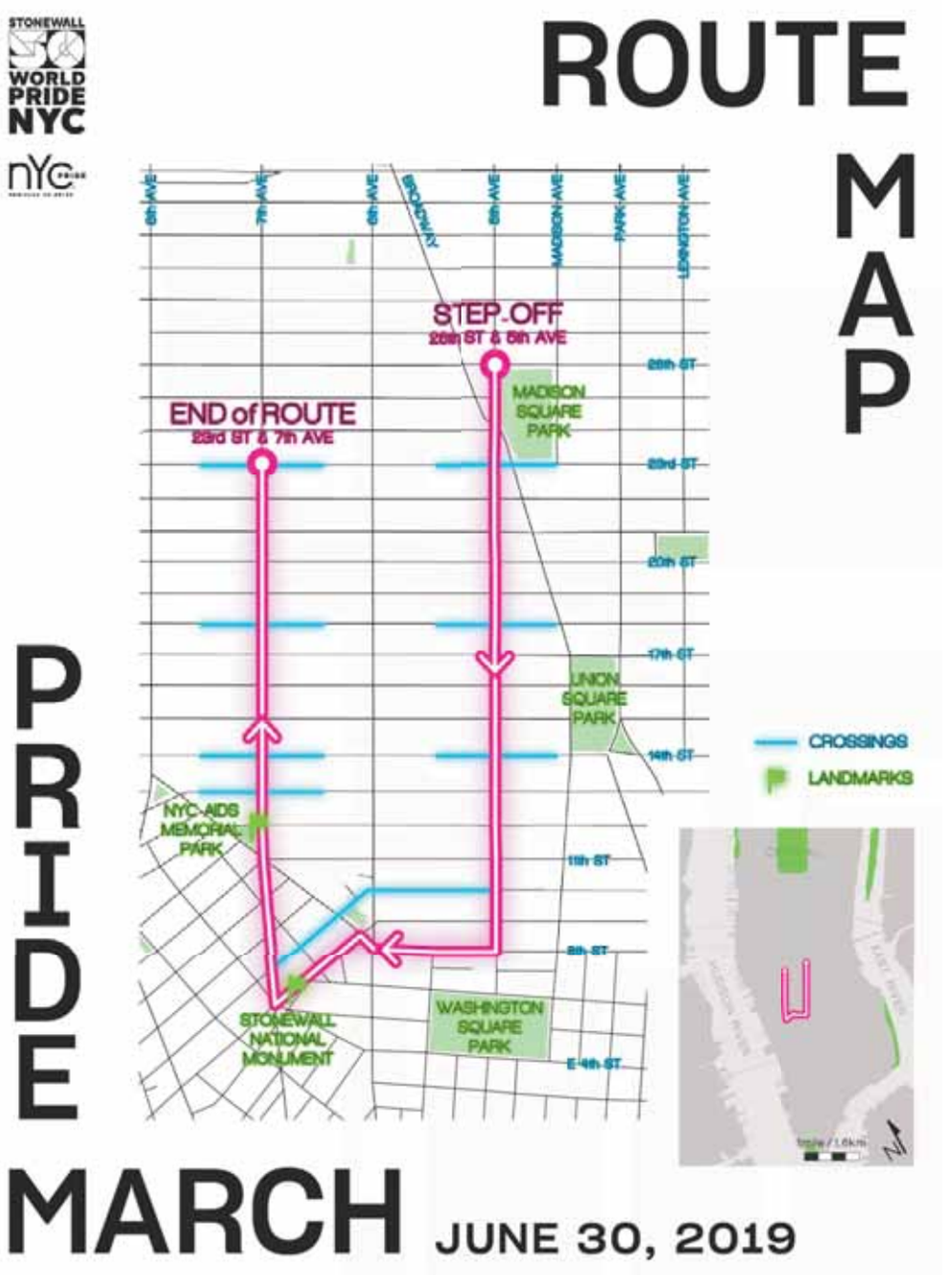
When is the 2019 Pride Parade?

This year the parade will be occurring June 30 at noon.

What Time Does the 2019 Pride Parade start? The step-off will begin at noon at 26th street and 5th avenue. Before the step-off, there will be a moment of silence at 11:58 a.m. to remember all the members of the LGBTQIA+ community who have lost their lives to AIDS, AIDS-related complications and hate crimes.

What is the 2019 Pride Parade NYC route?

According to a press release, "…marchers will proceed south on 5th Avenue before heading west on 8th Street. After crossing over 6th Avenue, the march will continue on Christopher Street, passing the site designated in 2016 by President Barack Obama as the Stonewall National Monument. It will then turn north on 7th Avenue, passing the New York City AIDS Memorial, before dispersing in Chelsea just north of 23rd Street and 7th Avenue."



Pride Parade NYC 2019 Street and MTA Closures

According to the Department of Transportation, the following streets will be closed during the 2019 Pride Parade on Sunday, June 30. Please note this if you're going to be traveling in or to New York City. For updated information, please refer to their website.

Formation (Manhattan Portion)

- 5th Avenue between 33rd Street and 25th Street
- 33rd Street between 6th Avenue and Park Avenue
- 32nd Street between 6th Avenue and Park Avenue
- 31st Street between 6th Avenue and Park Avenue South
- 30th Street between 6th Avenue and Park Avenue South
- 29th Street between 7th Avenue and Park Avenue South
- 28th Street between 6th Avenue and Park Avenue South
- 27th Street between 6th Avenue and Park Avenue South
- 26th Street between 6th Avenue and Park Avenue South

Route

- 5th Avenue between 25th Street and 8th Street
- 8th Street between 5th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- Greenwich Avenue between 6th Avenue and Christopher Street
- Christopher Street between Greenwich Avenue and 7th Avenue South
- 7th Avenue South between Christopher Street and Greenwich Avenue
- 7th Avenue between Greenwich Avenue and 23rd Street

Dispersal

- 7th Avenue between 23rd Street and 29th Street
- 25th Street between 9th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 26th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 27th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 28th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 29th Street between 9th Avenue and 6th Avenue

Festival

- 4th Avenue between 9th Street and 14th Street
- 13th Street between Broadway and 3rd Avenue
- 12th Street between Broadway and 3rd Avenue
- 10th Street between Broadway and 3rd Avenue
- 11th Street between 4th Avenue and 3rd Avenue
- Broadway between 46th Street and 50th Street
- 53rd Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avwenue
- 52nd Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 51st Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 50th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 49th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 48th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 47th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 46th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 45th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 44th Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 43rd Street between 8th Avenue and 6th Avenue

Miscellaneous

- 25th Street between 6th Avenue and Park Avenue South
- 24th Street between 8th Avenue and Park Avenue South
- 15th Street between 7th Avenue and Union Square West
- 11th Street between Greenwich Avenue and 6th Avenue
- 9th Street between 6th Avenue and University Place
- Greenwich Avenue between 7th Avenue and Christopher Street
- Christopher Street between Greenwich Avenue and 6th Avenue

Festival (Brooklyn Portion)

- Flatbush Avenue between Lafayette Avenue and 6th Avenue
- Atlantic Avenue between 3rd Avenue and 6th Avenue

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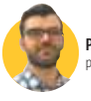

PAT KING
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There is so much pressure behind some of the leading online dating sites to find "the one" for you. But what if a committed relationship is the last thing you want to find while scrolling through different romantic prospects online? This is where Squirt.org comes in.

Established in 1998 and re-launching as a membership site in 2003, Squirt.org takes a no BS approach with it's intentions with its tagline, "Hot n' horny hookups", and intends to create an uncensored experience for gay, bi, and curious men looking to do away with all formalities before getting down to business.

The site has become a wildly popular option for those looking for a more casual encounter than the competing dating sites catering towards homosexual males. The site has raked up 14.6 million visitors per month with 186 million page views per month. 60% of all visits to Squirt are from mobile devices — which makes sense, when you think about it!

The breakdown of those who use Squirt.org is pretty comprehensive as well, with 45% of visitors to the site identifying as "gay", 42% identifying as "bi-sexual", and, interestingly enough, 7% indentifying as "straight". The majority of visitors to the site are in the 25-34 age range (25%), with a close second age range of 35-44 (22%).

The site is very detail-oriented in trying to cater to those looking for partners with specific preferences in the bedroom. After reviewing all of the users on their site, the people at Squirt.org have found that 54% of all users view themselves as versatile in the bedroom while 26% identify as bottoms and 20% identify as bottoms.

If you are interested in more of a carnal rendezvous than settling down with a soulmate, make sure to head over to Squirt.org to see who is ready to "play".

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It's amazing when patients who were once in excruciating pain... start feeling better. And start walking again. And playing golf. Or tennis. And finally getting their lives back.

Especially when they had gone to other doctors and tried so many other things.

So many had given up hope.

Sound familiar? If it does... check this out...

The Treatment Formula

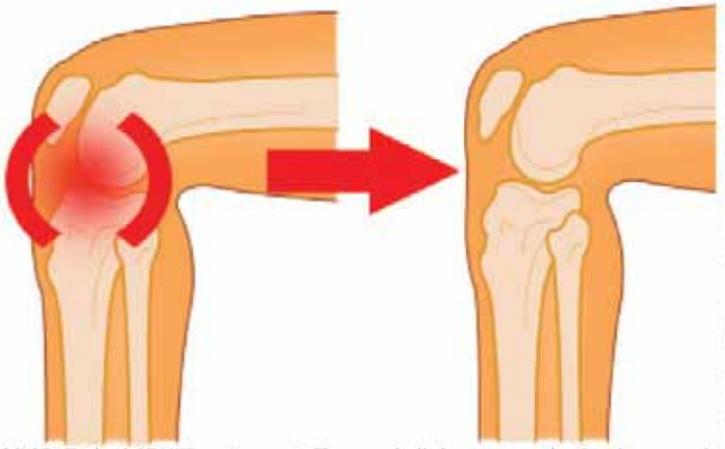
While I can't give you the entire treatment formula here (there is not enough space and WAY too complicated) I can give you the basics. And more important... I can tell you what it might be able to do for YOU.

The first and most important part of the formula is: PATIENT SELECTION.

This means, *NYC Pain MD* has a detailed screening process to tell who is most likely to be helped by their treatments... and who is not.

If you qualify, you have the opportunity to move forward and experience the worldclass treatments that *NYC Pain MD* offers.

If you do not, *NYC Pain MD* will tell you what they think your best options are and help you find the right doctor for you.



NYC Pain MD **"Treatment Formula"** A protocol of advanced medical treatments that has already helped thousands.

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- Stem Cell Therapy (Lipogems)
- Genicular Knee Block
- And more.

Once again, there is not enough space to go into detail about all these procedures... but here are some things you MUST KNOW....

Viscosupplementation is where a doctor introduces a gel-like medicine directly into the joint space. This helps to lubricate the joints often relieving some, most or even all of your pain. Results can last for 6 months to several years.

Many have had these treatments *without* good results. However, *NYC Pain MD* feels this is because doctors often do these "gel injections" without advanced imaging to guide them. Research shows they will often miss the joint. If the joint is missed... it is impossible for the treatment to work.

NYC Pain MD has spared no expense and used advanced imaging to guide the injections assuring the medicine gets into the joint. We frequently get results when this treatment was a failure done elsewhere.

The second thing you must know is... our treatment plans are custom made for every patent. And we have all these treatments offered in the same place. Many times you will get the best results from multiple treatments. At *NYC Pain MD* your doctors will all be there and will all know each other and you and your case. They work together and give you the best treatments and care without you having to go anywhere else.

The ability to select the right patients and then have the potential to give them any or all of these treatments... with all the necessary medical technology... under one roof... has allowed *NYC Pain MD* to get better results than they thought possible.

Here's What You Should Do Next

If you suffer with knee pain... and any of this made sense to you... *NYC Pain MD* would like to offer you a No-cost screening. That screening is the first step in our "Treatment Formula."

You will get to see a doctor and ask any questions you have. Your doctor will take the first steps to see if you qualify for treatments and give you recommendations.

The best thing is... you will finally get direction. You will know what's going on and what is your best course of action… step-by-step. The treatments will be explained in detail and you will breathe a big sigh of relief finally knowing what's going on and what can or cannot be done.

There is so much we want to say to help you... but I'm out of space. Give us a call at ***877-296-6310*** and take the first step. That step is free without obligation.

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READER WRITE-INS:

MISSING THE "OLD NYC"

The other day I overheard someone say, "I wish I coulda been in NYC in the '70s. It was cool." Yeah, I miss it too. I miss the subway cars so covered with graffiti that you couldn't see out the windows to know what station you were at (conductors didn't announce them then). I miss garbage strikes and blackouts (major fun!). And I pine for the days when Bryant Park and Union Square were no-man's-land. And muggers!! Oooooweee! The good ol' days. Young people, you don't know how good you got it!

— **Alexander,** *Metro New York reader*

ISTOCK

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Read the fine print if you are negotiating a contract. Make an adjustment to your living arrangements or help an older relative get used to inevitable changes.

Taurus Handle people with care. How you deal with others will make a difference in how well you are treated in return. Choose to be kind and sensitive.

Gemini A professional change that offers greater freedom should be looked at seriously. Money is important, but not more so than your mental and emotional health. Aim to lower stress.

Cancer Make positive suggestions and lend a helping hand. Don't make a change just because someone else does. Don't react or respond impulsively.

Leo Let change come to you. Refuse to let your emotions take control or lead you into an unsavory situation. Choose peace and love over discord, and health over excess and indulgence.

Virgo An attitude adjustment will encourage you to make a change. Let go of people and situations that have been dragging you down. A practical lifestyle will get you back on track.

Libra Force issues and make things happen. If you don't, someone else will take charge and control what you can and cannot do. If you don't take action, you'll have only yourself to blame.

Scorpio Your emotions will dictate the changes you make. Try not to let anger or irrational behavior lead to a no-win situation. Think matters through before you take action.

Sagittarius Review your relationships with others. Reducing stress can be as easy as eliminating the people or situations that are causing you grief. Do what's best for you.

Capricorn Deals can be made if you are direct about what you want and what you have to offer. Don't expect everyone to be pleased by a change to how you think or do things.

Aquarius Do your own thing and don't let what others say or do interfere with your plans. Use your skills and experience to help you get ahead.

Pisces Do your own thing and don't let what others say or do interfere with your plans. Use your skills and experience to help you get ahead. EUGENIA LAST

LUZ LANCHEROS
MWN

GETTY

'Realists win because they always bet on failure'
DANIEL HABIF

One of the most popular motivational speakers in the world chatted with Metro.

In a world where we have imposed almost a dictatorship over happiness, it has become an empty word often loaded with ignorance, privilege and denial of the reality complexities. But Daniel Habif has managed to make millions of people — 3.8 million followers on Instagram, including Barack Obama, and half a million on YouTube — follow his advice. With his "Unbreakable" tour, he wants to show people that positivism goes beyond being a cliché phrase on Instagram. And that it is a reality that changes lives! Metro spoke with Habif to learn more.

What is being "unbreakable" about?
It is about having the ability to never give up, but to give oneself a truce. Having the ability to get up despite the weight you have on top. It is about knowing a lot, but doing more. It is about being afraid, but not scared. It is hooking the harpoon of anger, of revenge. It is thinking more about good than evil. It is to be faithful, disciplined. About being focused. It is a cluster of virtues already possessed by human beings. Sometimes we forget about them, because we think they have no value in a society.

Positivism is now sold everywhere. What does it really mean to be positive?
It goes beyond being in a "club of positive absurdities" that seek to deny reality. Although there are those who invite you to that club, to a fantasy world, I am not someone who denies pain. Denying pain is denying humanity. On the contrary, I seek to teach how to use that pain in your favor. Now, positivism shows you and teaches you that it is useless to beat someone else if you do not beat yourself.

Positivism matters. Words matter. Linguistics matter. It matters what you say, it matters what you think. It matters how and for what you think. Positivism is necessary for the balance of the world's energy charge. The negative energy is always present. It is more attractive, because it is easier to go by the "inertia of the bad" than to go for the confrontational of the good. The serious problem we have is that the good has many enthusiasts. Enthusiasts, but not professionals. And the bad is the opposite: it has few enthusiasts, but many professionals.

In one of the books writer Anne Rice said, "Evil is always an option, kindness is a difficulty."
It is. Goodness has a very high price to pay. In evil, nothing is lost. In goodness, everything is uncertainty: you do good things for the wrong people thinking otherwise. But when you give kindness hoping to receive goodness, you are a slave to your own emptiness. That is why it is very difficult to be kind, because you make yourself stay empty. You do not expect anyone to fill you up, you give because you have something to spare, not because you lack. That is why it is so difficult to live in goodness.

Why is it so hard to believe in something?
I think it's very easy to believe, the hard part is in what to believe. The eternal freedom of the human being is between deciding and choosing. Many want to believe but not all are willing to pay the price. In fact, today it is very difficult to say in what you believe. If you realize, nobody wants to take responsibility for their convictions. Nobody wants to pay the price of the trial, of the sentence.

> *"When you accept your reality, you sign the death certificate on your life, because there is nothing more dangerous in this world than the resignation of who you are supposed to be."*

Confrontation is sometimes confused with violence. What is the difference between those two things? How to separate them?
Violence is based on pride, on foolishness. Violence is born of weakness, not firmness. The confrontation is born of firmness.

How to confront but avoid being destroyed in the process?
There's a paradigm: sometimes you need war to bring peace. It is the deep dichotomy of the human being. It is not a matter of semantics, but of accommodation. It is a theme that peace takes a lot of pain. But it is a thing that is worth dreaming about.

In a tweet you criticized studies and news where bad habits were rewarded. We have many memes that make fun of our lives. Why do we love such content?
We want to receive news about our bad habits. We want the achievements of others, but not to pay the price they paid to obtain them. This world needs more crazy and dreamers. More than ever, because it is up to us to make reality a deeper plane. When you accept your reality, you sign the death certificate of your life, because there is nothing more dangerous in this world than the resignation of who you are supposed to be. To conform is to lose the capacity for wonder, although nothing of what surrounds us has ceased to be amazing. Never.

If you lose that, conformism arrives and that means accepting reality in an absurd way. And the realist always wins: always bet on failure, always bet on error. And it is very simple because people are so obsessed with speed (the urgency to be rich, famous, important). We think that positivism is something stupid, that motivation is useless, that to enter values, ethics, citizenship, self-control, discernment, etc. — those things do not matter. We are in an era where knowledge matters more than understanding. "That guy is a genius," but he does not do anything with it.

What's wrong with the perception of God? There are many people who have an unhealthy relationship.
Following God is very difficult. And it depends on how you get to him. It depends if it was a religious experience, if you were broke, with addictions, illnesses and suddenly a miracle happened in your life and you became someone who wants to share that love and passion for him. … There are people who love God in an ignorant way. And they want to share it. And then they become "the club of the good guys" to work against the "bad guys' club."

God is not that. People who read the Bible and understand it know that "Love God above all things" and "Love God as yourself" summarize the entire Bible. But there are others who have arrogance in their understanding. They know everything, but they do not understand the other commandments. It is very difficult to follow God, but it is more difficult not to follow him. And they lock God in a box, in four walls and fill it with traditions.

There are rules. There are laws. Because without laws, there is chaos. If there were no laws, we would live in a nation of judges. But it is the most beautiful thing, the free will: that God loves you even though you do not agree with him. At least, I think the huge difference in the case of Jesus is his relationship with death. If you see his leadership, you see someone with character. It is not shy, it is confrontational, liberating, revolutionary and it educated and liberated 12 very bad, incoherent, incongruous types. It's how you get to God. There are people who are saved and only use him for their purposes instead of him using them for his own. When one understands that, life changes completely.

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Antarctic alert: Permafrost thaw accelerates

NASA/CHRIS LARSEN

Scientists have warned that the white continent is losing 125 billion tons of ice a year.

GABRIEL ARCE GRANIZO MWN

When it comes to global warming, there are still those who mistakenly question whether it is really affecting our planet and its existence. However, if we talk about the rhythm of the melting on the poles, there is no one who can question the terrifying figures.

The story about the effects of climate change on Antarctica and the Arctic is the only one that can be repeated a thousand times and still will not stop surprising. Scientists keep discussing how everything came to this point and whether humanity is in a frantic race to the dreaded point of no return.

According to historical records, the Earth is warming by 0.18° Celsius per decade. Recently, the symposium "Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change" was held at the University of Santiago de Chile ahead of the November's COP 25.

The data that came up during the even was stunning. Only during this century, Antarctica has lost more than 1.5k billion tones of ice, according to NASA's Grace satellite. To compare, an official Olympic swimming pool's capacity is just of 2.5 million.

"The problem is that this tendency of the loss of ice is accelerating. Each year we loose more than during the previous one," Raúl Cordero, expert on climate change and leader of the Antarctic Research Group of the Usach, explained.

It is estimated that the white continent loses about 125 billion tons of ice per year.

"These are huge quantities, almost impossible to size," Cordero added.

So, for example, if we would want to keep the thaw speed at zero, 5k large cisterns (of 50 cubic meters) loaded with ice per minute should be brought to Antarctica.

Other studies show that in the eighties, the annual melting of Antarctica was about 40 gigatons, while now the figure rose to 252. Thus the rhythm of melting sextupled in four decades.

"The sea is rising around 3 millimetres per year, and Antarctica contributes between 10 and 15 per cent of sea level rise," Cordero stated.

And that is when COP 25 appears with special relevance.

"The government [Chilean] states that the important issues are oceans and Antarctic, it wants this COP to be blue," Giovanni Calderón, member of the presidential advisory committee of the COP, commented.

Calderón explains that in Chile, the United Nations event will become the turning point between concluding agreements and moving on to implementation.

"That's where the accent should be. Antarctica is especially relevant not so much for its freshwater reserves, but because the poles act as regulators of the climate," he mentioned.

Calderón concluded: "In November, the intergovernmental panel of the United Nations will issue a report on the cryosphere, which talks about ice fields and glaciers. What it is going to reveal is super important."

USWNT ready to rumble today with France

Today's clash between two women's soccer powers should be an instant classic.

MATT BURKE
matthew.burke@metro.us

Alex Morgan #13 of USA looks on during the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup

GETTY IMAGES

The 2019 Women's World Cup Final will not take place until Sunday, July 7 but for all intents and purposes today's USA-France matchup in Paris is this tournament's title game.

The USWNT and France are the top two favorites to win the tournament, with +170 and +350 odds respectively (odds via MetroBet.us/Sugar). Back in December when the World Cup draw was announced, most everyone anticipated an Elite 8 matchup between the two powerhouses and here we are today.

Today's showdown will — no doubt — be a classic, though both teams are coming off sub-par performances in the Round of 16. The Americans barely squeaked by Spain with a 2-1 victory and needed a pair of penalty kick goal from Megan Rapinoe to get the job done. Meanwhile, France went into extra time with Brazil before captain Amandine Henry notched the game-winner.

Morgan magic?

The USWNT could use one of those transcendent performances from Alex Morgan today. Morgan ripped off five goals in the team's clobbering of Thailand in the first game of the tournament but she has been held scoreless since.

A big part of the reason Morgan has been silent of late is that opposing teams are playing bully-ball with her, and tackling at every opportunity. Despite having missed one goal, Morgan has been the most fouled player in this tournament.

Spain was particularly rough with the entire USWNT, and it's a good bet that the French will also attempt to make it a physical match. France's defensive wizard, Wendie Renard, will be the primary woman in charge of slowing down Morgan.

France has allowed a grand total of two goals in four games played in the World Cup thus far. The United States has given up just one.

Offensively, the French are led by Henry (two goals in 2019 World Cup), Eugenie Le Sommer (two goals), and Valerie Gauvin (two goals). Following a four-goal outburst in their opener against Korea Republic, France has scored just five goals total in the three games since.

The USWNT, meanwhile, has seven total goals in their last three games and has scored at least twice in each contest played in the tournament.

VSiN Nuggets

- The U.S. was laying the equivalent of 1.25 goals Monday vs. Spain in global markets. The Stars and Stripes needed two successful penalty kicks to win the game 2-1. Stunningly, its hyped machinery of offensive talent could only put three shots on goal, while earning just three corner kicks.

  Give the team credit for possessing the ball often enough in the penalty area to get kicked in the shin. More is expected vs. mediocre opposition at those odds.

- The U.S. did cover the goal line in a prior 2-0 win over Sweden in group play. But, that game featured only four shots on goal and five corner kicks for the big favorites. This was a team expected to launch dangerous shots at will vs. lesser lights.

- France, laying -1.25 goals vs. Brazil, needed overtime to survive 2-1. France's first tally was its ONLY shot on goal for the bulk of regulation time. Aging Brazil ran out of gas or the hosts may not have made it to Friday.

- France, laying just under -1.5 goals vs. Norway in group play could only manage a 2-1 victory (helped by a penalty kick in the final minutes). The French had trouble keeping possession, losing that stat 56% to 44% to the big underdog.

Hey, both teams are undefeated. Both could easily have been caught looking ahead to this meeting that everyone's been talking about since the day of the draw. Friday's winner will still be the market favorite to lift the Cup, though Germany has been getting a lot of sharp play on the futures board. Neither is yet playing to big-game expectations. **Jeff Fogle**

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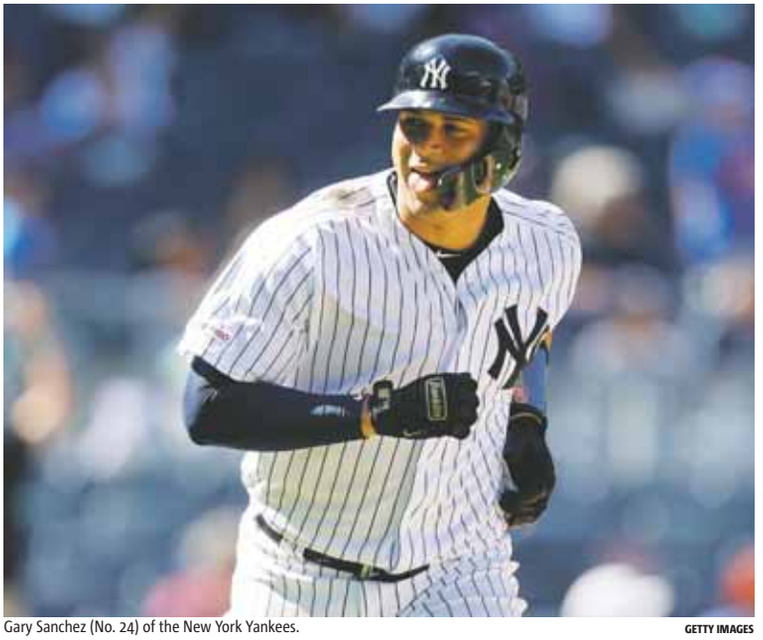

Gary Sanchez (No. 24) of the New York Yankees. GETTY IMAGES

Yankees running away from Red Sox in AL East

Bettors have cooled on the defending World Series champs.

VSiN

There's a big question on everyone's mind heading into a history-making, two-game weekend series in London, England: Do the Boston Red Sox have a chance to catch the New York Yankees from nine games back in the American League East?

The short answer, based on stat indicators and recent form, is probably not … with an outright NO possibly clearing the fog quickly. After winning 11 of its last 12 games, New York is currently 24 games over .500. Dropping three of its last five at home to Toronto and the Chicago White Sox, Boston is just six games over. 500.

London's calling to say this might not be much of a clash.

If the Yankees slow from their current .650 pace to play .600 the rest of the season, Boston would have to finish 57-23 to catch them. It's no sure thing that the Yanks are going to cool off.

This highly anticipated trip to the Thames provides a nice bridge from the first half of the season to the second. The Red Sox just played game No. 81 (out of 162) Tuesday night. The Yankees will play No. 81 Saturday. Let's look at some key midseason indicator stats.

Run differential

New York is +97, Boston +54. The Red Sox have dropped noticeably from +229 in their 108-win 2018 campaign.

Records vs. teams over .500

As we've discussed in prior reports, Boston has struggled badly in litmus tests. The Sox are just 17-22 (.435) against teams with winning records. The Yankees haven't lost a step, posting a strong 20-11 (.645) mark.

Road offense

Regular readers know that VSiN encourages bettors to focus on road stats when evaluating baseball teams. This significantly reduces pollution that can be caused by home ballpark influences.

New York is averaging an astonishing six runs per game on the road this season. Boston is more than a half-run back at 5.4. While both teams have posted batting averages of .263 in road games, the Yankees are getting more runners on base (.345 to .340 in on-base percentage), and thriving in the area of bangers and mash (.459 to .441 in slugging percentage).

Health

New York has been on a three-month tear despite having several key stars miss much of the season. Boston's been much healthier by comparison.

All that adds up to one-sided market sentiment regarding Boston's AL East hopes. The William Hill sportsbook currently has the Yankees at -475 to win the AL East (risk $475 to win $100, or anything in that ratio). That's a win equivalent of 83 percent. Boston is 8/1 (risk $100, to win $800, etc.) for a win percentage of only 11 percent (sportsbooks build a universe larger than 100 percent to create a house edge; Tampa Bay is currently 18 percent to win the division).

The Yanks will likely rule the AL East. Who will rule Britannia?

Jeff Fogle

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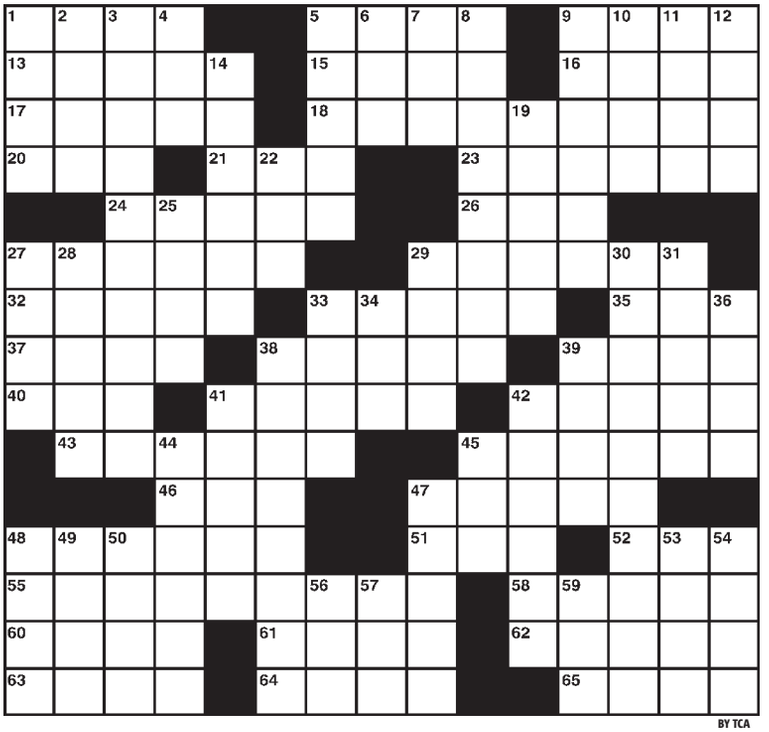

BY TCA

ACROSS

1 '70s carpet style
5 Applaud
9 British bloke
13 Deadly critter
15 Mantilla fabric
16 Frau's hubby
17 Monastery head
18 Docility
20 Eur. nation
21 Light brown
23 Like formal attire
24 Thrill
26 __ Angeles
27 Counsel; recommendation
29 Extends a subscription
32 Building block
33 Rains cats & dogs
35 Likely
37 Hose problem
38 Football kicks
39 Acacia or aspen
40 Break a fast
41 Web surfer's stops
42 Multiplier's word
43 Tyrant
45 Pulls apart
46 Play on words
47 Exposed
48 Cling; stick
51 One in Oaxaca
52 Mistaken
55 Went in again
58 Part of USNA
60 __ in; wearing
61 __ up on; study about
62 Camille portrayer
63 Smacks
64 Lively
65 Got bigger

DOWN

1 Read over quickly
2 Vagrant
3 Abridge
4 Miracle-__; plant food
5 Duplicate
6 Blood analysis site
7 King topper
8 Street vendors
9 Swiss or American
10 Chickens' moms
11 Semicircles
12 __ on; victimize
14 Assault
19 Actor Jeremy
22 Feasted
25 Keep an ice cream cone from dripping
27 Suffix for comfort or chew
28 Horrible fear
29 Grooves
30 Reheated
31 Drive too fast
33 Play miniature golf
34 Late bedtime
36 Actress Harper
38 Western settlers
39 Grow weary
41 Gush forth
42 Mob
44 Depletes one's funds
45 Word before Antonio or José
47 Pal
48 St. Louis landmark
49 Place to buy salami & rye
50 Warmth
53 Destiny
54 Blemish
56 Elected official: abbr.
57 Corncob
59 So. Amer. nation

metro.us/wordsearch

P	R	O	D	U	C	E	R	S	T
K	N	S	I	L	E	N	T	J	S
X	I	C	D	Q	S	H	B	E	P
Q	B	H	J	O	G	R	L	A	O
Y	O	A	O	I	O	D	R	T	M
O	R	I	T	O	D	O	C	W	M
U	J	R	K	A	D	G	O	E	O
N	X	S	S	Y	V	M	E	L	V
G	Y	D	E	M	O	C	A	V	I
B	L	A	Z	I	N	G	Y	E	E

Blazing
Brooks
Chairs
Comedy
Hood
Mel
Movie
Parody
Producers
Robin
Saddles
Silent
Tights
Twelve
Young

metro.us/wander

Category: Film Fusion

	A	D	N	D
	L	Y	A	T
M	R	I	E	H
Y	F	A	T	
P	M	A	R	

Trace a path, using every letter once, to find the hidden phrase. Your path can turn in any direction, but not diagonally.

metro.us/sudoku

				8			3	
		1			5		6	9
9			1	3		7		
		5			1		7	
7	4		9		8		2	1
	6		7			4		
		9		1	6			3
6	3		5			9		
	1			9				

Yesterday's Answers pg.34

T	A	C			S	H	A	F	T			F	L	E	A
O	I	L	S		H	E	L	L	O			L	U	A	U
T	R	O	T		R	A	D	A	R			A	R	T	S
	S	T	I	M	U	L	A	N	T			V	E	S	T
			N	A	B	S			I	D	O				
K	H	A	K	I	S		T	O	L	E	R	A	T	E	
R	A	G	E	D		T	E	A	L	S		R	U	B	
O	V	E	R		V	O	D	K	A		L	O	B	O	
N	O	N		B	A	L	D	S		W	O	M	E	N	
A	C	T	U	A	L	L	Y		C	A	N	A	R	Y	
			T	A	U			T	A	N	G				
R	I	F	T		A	C	C	O	R	D	I	N	G		
A	B	L	E		B	R	U	T	E		N	E	E	D	
J	E	E	R		L	I	T	H	E		G	A	T	E	
A	X	E	S		E	B	S	E	N			R	A	W	

Yesterday's Answers pg.35

	D	I	S		A	S	H	E	S		E	B	B	S
T	E	N	T		S	H	U	S	H		N	O	A	H
E	A	S	Y		T	U	R	P	E	N	T	I	N	E
A	R	T		P	E	T	T	Y		O	I	L	E	D
		R	E	A	R	S			B	B	C			
S	Q	U	A	T	S			S	L	E	E	P	S	
L	U	C	R	E		S	H	O	A	L		A	H	A
O	A	T	S		C	L	I	M	B		D	R	A	G
T	K	O		S	L	O	P	E		S	A	L	V	E
	E	R	E	N	O	W			S	E	R	I	E	S
			R	I	D			M	A	N	N	A		
S	L	O	O	P		B	L	I	N	D		M	P	H
W	O	N	D	E	R	L	A	N	D		B	E	A	U
A	B	L	E		O	U	N	C	E		O	N	C	E
T	O	Y	S		T	R	E	E	D		A	T	E	

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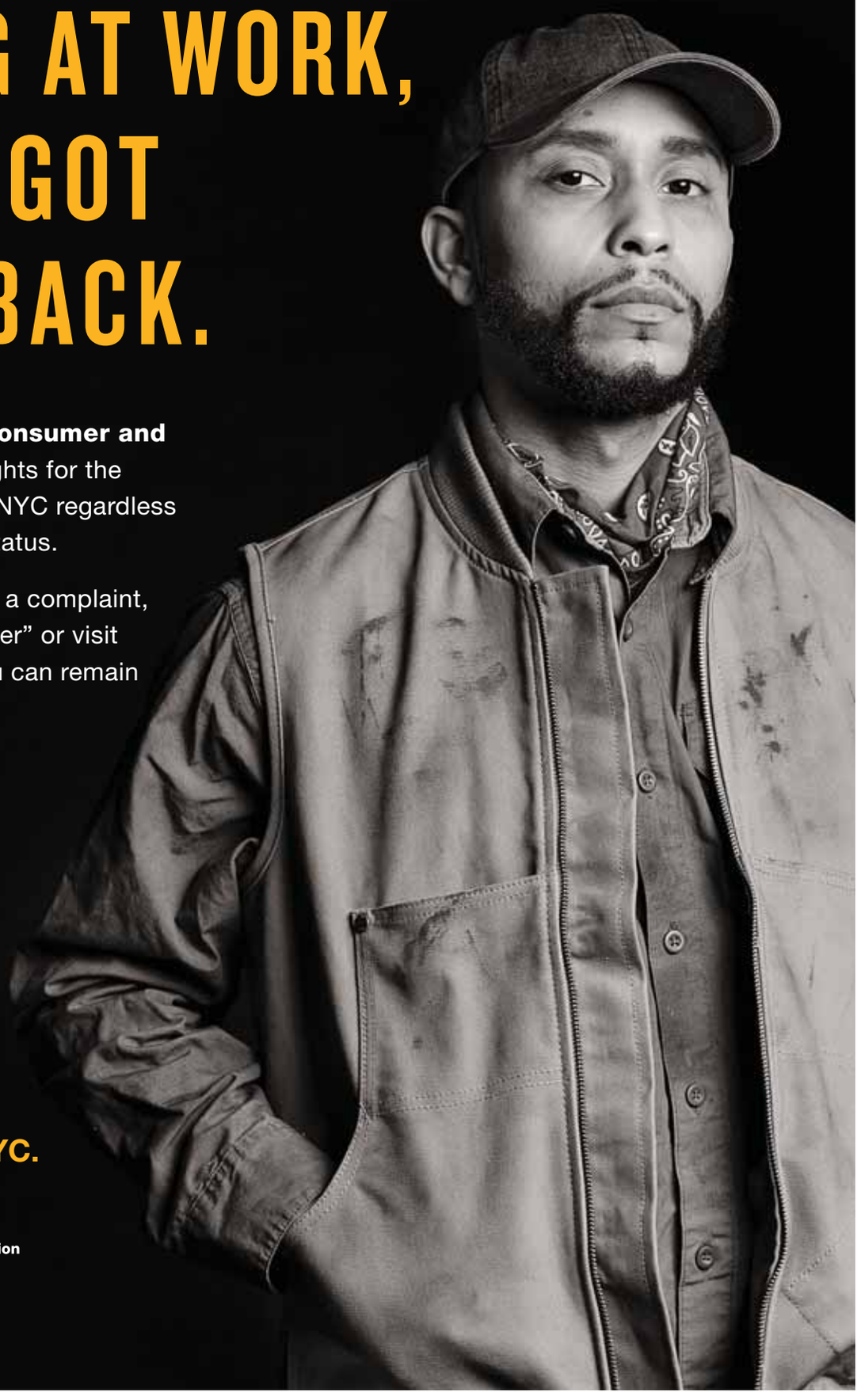

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